

Statistics of the Negroes in the United States, by Henry Gannett ...

THE TRUSTEES OF THE JOHN F. SLATER FUND Occasional Papers, No. 4

STATISTICS OF THE NEGROES IN THE UNITED STATES BY HENRY GANNETT OF THE UNITED STATES
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

BALTIMORE PUBLISHED BY THE TRUSTEES

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The statistics in the following paper have been examined by Hon. Carroll D. Wright, Superintendent of the Census of the United States, and are published with his approbation. He was not requested to express an opinion in respect to the author's views,—nor has he done so.

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A STATISTICAL SKETCH OF THE NEGROES IN THE UNITED STATES.

INTRODUCTION.

From the time of the earliest settlements upon these shores, the United States has contained two elements of population, the white race and the negro race. These two races have together peopled this country, increasing partly by accessions to their numbers from abroad and partly by natural increase, until to-day (1894) the white race numbers probably 61,000,000 and the negroes 8,000,000. The history of the latter race, thus brought into close association with a more civilized and stronger people for two and three-fourths centuries, is one of surpassing interest. Unfortunately, however, this history, for the earlier part of the period, is, with the exception of a few fragments, utterly lost. For the last century, however, since the year 1790, the date of the first United States census, we

have, at ten-year intervals, pictures of the distribution of the race, and considerable information regarding its social condition.

Slave Trade.

The slave trade flourished actively up to the close of the last century, and indeed it did not entirely cease until the year 1808. It was mainly in the hands of the English, including their North American colonies. It was a large and flourishing business for the ship-owners of New England, and the wealth of many of the families of those colonies originated in this traffic.

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Of the number of slaves brought from Africa to this country, either directly or by way of the West India Islands, we have very little information. Prior to 1788 there are no records, and since that time the records of the slave trade do not distinguish between the slaves brought to the United States and those to other parts of America.

Of the number of slaves in this country in colonial times the information is almost equally scanty, consisting of little more than estimates by different historical writers. Of these, Bancroft's are perhaps as reliable as any. His estimates of the number of negroes at different times are as follows:

1750 220,000

1754 260,000

1760 310,000

1770 462,000

1780 562,000

Numbers of Each Race.

In 1790 we have the first reliable data regarding the number and distribution of the negroes. The total number of each race at this and each succeeding decennial enumeration is shown in the following table:

CENSUS YEAR.	WHITE.	NEGRO.
1790	3,172,006	757,208
1800	4,306,446	1,002,037
1810	5,862,073	1,377,808
1820	7,862,166	1,771,656
1830	10,537,378	2,328,642
1840	14,195,805	2,873,648
1850	19,553,068	3,638,808
1860	26,922,537	4,441,830
1870	33,589,377	4,880,009
1880	43,402,970	6,580,793
1890	54,983,890	7,470,040

From this it appears that the whites have increased in a century from a little over 3,000,000 to nearly 55,000,000, and the negroes from three-fourths of a million to about seven and one-half millions. The whites were in 1890 nearly eighteen times as numerous as in 1790, the negroes nearly ten times as numerous.

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The diagram constituting Plate I presents the same facts in graphic form. In each case the total length of the bar is proportional to the total population in the year indicated. The white portion of each bar represents the white population of the country, while the shaded portion represents the negro population.

The tables and diagram illustrate the rapid growth of the country in population, both of its white and its negro element.

Proportions of Each Race.

The following table shows the proportions in which the total population was made up of these two elements at each census, expressed in percentages of the total population:

CENSUS.	WHITE.	NEGRO.	1790	80.73	19.27	1800	81.12	18.88	1810	80.97	19.03	1820	81.61	18.39	1830	81.90	18.10	1840	83.16	16.84	1850	84.31	15.69	1860	85.62	14.13	1870	87.11	12.66	1880	86.54	13.12	1890	87.80	11.93
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This table and Plate II show that on the whole the negroes have diminished decidedly in proportion to the whites. In 1790 they formed 19.27 per cent. or very nearly one-fifth of the whole population. At the end of this century they constituted only 11.93 per cent., or less than one-eighth of the population. At the end of the century their proportion was less than two-thirds as large as at this beginning. Moreover, this diminution in the proportion has been almost unbroken from the beginning to the end of the century. The proportion of the negroes has apparently increased in only two out of the eleven censuses, namely in 1810, immediately after the cessation of the slave trade, and in 1880. I say apparently, because in the latter case the 8 increase is only apparent, due to a deficient enumeration of this race in the census preceding, namely, that of 1870.

Rates of Increase.

The following table and the diagram accompanying it show the rates of increase of the negroes during each of the ten-year periods for the last century, and placed in juxtaposition therewith for comparison are the rates of increase of the whites of the entire country.

PERCENTAGE OF INCREASE. DECADE. WHITE, NEGRO. 1790 to 1800 35.76 32.33 1800 to 1810 36.12 37.50 1810 to 1820 34.12 28.59 1820 to 1830 34.03 31.44 1830 to 1840 34.72 23.40 1840 to 1850 37.74 26.63 1850 to 1860 37.69 22.07 1860 to 1870 24.76 9.86 1870 to 1880 29.22 34.85 1880 to 1890 26.68 13.51

Per Cent.

Rates of Increase of White and Negro Population.

TOTAL POPULATION AND WHITE AND NEGRO ELEMENTS.

PROPORTION OF THE NEGRO ELEMENT TO THE TOTAL POPULATION.

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This table and diagram show that, with the exception of two ten-year periods, namely, those from 1800 to 1810 and 1870 to 1880, the negro element has in every case increased at a less rapid rate than the white element, and in many cases its rate of increase has been very much smaller.

Thus a comparison of the numerical progress of the negroes with that of the whites in the country, as a whole, shows that the former have not held their own, but have constantly fallen behind. They have not increased as rapidly as the whites.

It may be said that this is due to the enormous immigration which certain parts of the country has received, an immigration composed entirely of whites. This suggestion can easily be tested. White immigration on a considerable scale began about 1847. Prior to that time it was not of importance. We may then divide the century into two equal parts and contrast the relative rates of increase of the races during those half-centuries. Between 1790 and 1840 the whites increased 4.5 times, the negroes 3.8 times. The latter element had diminished in relative importance in this half-century from about one-fifth of the population to one-sixth.

In the succeeding fifty years the whites had increased 3.9 times and the colored 2.6 times only. In other words, the greater increase of the whites has not been dependent upon immigration, since their rate of increase was greater than that of the negroes before immigration set in.

These figures, and the conclusions necessarily derived from them, should set at rest forever all fears regarding any possible conflict between the two races. We have before us the testimony of a century to show us that the negroes, while in no danger of extinction, while increasing at a rate probably more rapid than in any other part of the earth, are yet increasing less rapidly than the white people of the country, and to demonstrate that the latter will become more and more numerically the

dominant race in America. Whether the negro will, through an improvement in his social condition, become of greater importance relatively to his numbers is a matter to be discussed later.

Center of Population.

The center of population, as it is called, may be described as the center of gravity of the inhabitants as they are distributed at the time under consideration, each inhabitant being supposed to have the same weight and to press downwards with a force proportional to his distance from this center.

The center of population of all the inhabitants of the United States has been computed for each census. At the time of the first census, in 1790, the center of population was found to be in Maryland, on the eastern shore of Chesapeake Bay, nearly opposite Baltimore. The general westward movement of population has caused a corresponding westward movement of this center, such movement following very nearly the line of the 39th parallel of north latitude. In 1880 the center of the total population was found on the south bank of the Ohio river, nearly opposite Cincinnati, and in 1890 it was found in southern Indiana, twenty miles east of Columbus, in latitude $39^{\circ}12'$ and in longitude $85^{\circ}33'$.

The center of the negro population has been computed in 1880 and in 1890. At the first of these dates it was found in latitude $34^{\circ}42'$ and in longitude $84^{\circ}58'$. This position is in the northwestern corner of Georgia, not far from Dalton. In 1890 it was found to have moved southwestward into latitude $34^{\circ}26'$ and longitude $85^{\circ}18'$, being not far from the boundary between Alabama and Georgia and a few miles west of Rome, Ga. The longitude of the center of the negro population was very nearly the same as that of the total population, but in latitude it was nearly five degrees, or more than 300 miles south of it. The positions of the center of total population and of the negro population in 1880 and in 1890 are shown upon the map which constitutes Plate VI.

The movements of the center of population are the net resultant of all the movements of population. During the 11 past decade the negroes have moved in all directions, north, south, east, and west, but, as indicated by the movement of the center, the net resultant of their movements has been toward the southwest. As a whole this element moved in a southwesterly direction a distance of about 25 miles.

Free Negroes and Slaves.

Prior to 1870 the negro element, as returned by the successive censuses, was made up of two parts, free negroes and slaves. The proportions of these elements differed at different times, as is shown by the first column in the following table.

Per cent. which free negroes bore to all negroes. Per cent. of all free negroes found in former slave states Per cent. of all free negroes found in free states. 1790 8. 55 45 1800 11. 56 44 1810 13.5 58 42 1820 13. 57 43 1830 14. 57 43 1840 13. 56 44 1850 12. 55 45 1860 11. 54 46

From this it appears that the free negroes constituted in 1790 only 8 per cent. of all negroes, that the proportion increased rapidly to 1830, when they constituted not less than 14 per cent., and from that time the proportion diminished until in 1860 they constituted 11 per cent. of all negroes.

Moreover, the proportions of the free negroes found within the slave states and the free states differed at different times, as is shown by the second and third columns of the above table. The second column shows that on the whole considerably more than half of the free negroes were found within the former slave states and less than one-half within the free states, and that the proportion of free negroes which were found in the former slave states ranged from 54 per cent. in 1860 to 58 per cent. in 1810.

Distribution of the Negro Element.

The negroes are distributed very unequally over the country. While they are found in every state and territory and 12 in almost every county of the land, the vast body of them are found in the southern states, in those states lying south of Mason and Dixon's line, the Ohio river, the northern boundary of Missouri, and westward as far as Texas and Arkansas. The two maps upon Plate III illustrate their distribution, state by state, over the country. One of these maps shows their density, that is, the average number in each square mile. It is an absolute measure of their numbers in different parts of the country. It is seen that they are the most plentiful in Maryland, Virginia, South Carolina, and Mississippi, and secondarily in North Carolina, Tennessee, Georgia, Alabama, and Louisiana. On the other hand, in nearly all the northern and western states they are very sparsely distributed, there being in these states, with scarcely an exception, less than four of them to a square mile, while in many of them there is less than one to a square mile.

The other map shows the proportion which the negro element bears to the total population, state by state. This is a measure of its importance relative to the whites. From this map it is seen that in three states, Louisiana, Mississippi, and South Carolina, more than half the people are negroes. Indeed, in South Carolina three out of every five of the inhabitants are of this race. It is seen further that in all the states along the Atlantic and Gulf, from Virginia to Louisiana, together with Arkansas, more than one-fourth of the people are negroes, while, on the other hand, throughout the entire north and west the proportion of negroes is less than five per cent., and in many of the states it is less than one per cent. of the total population.

Proportion of the Negroes in the Slave States.

The distribution of the negro race may be still more closely characterized by the statement that in 1890 there were found in the former slave states not less than 92 per cent. of all negroes. This proportion has differed at different times during the last century, as is shown in the following table.

PROPORTION OF NEGROES TO TOTAL POPULATION IN 1890.

DENSITY OF NEGRO POPULATION IN 1890.

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PROPORTION OF TOTAL NEGRO ELEMENT COMPRISED IN FORMER SLAVE STATES.

YEAR.

PER CENT.

1790 91

1800 91

1810 92

1820 93

1830 93

1840 94

1850 95

1860 95

1870 93

1880 93

1890 92

From this table it will be seen that at the commencement of this history the former slave states contained 91 per cent. of the negroes of the country. As time wore on this proportion increased until in 1850 and 1860 they comprised 95 per cent., or nineteen-twentieths of all, while since that date, *i. e.* during the period of freedom of the race, it has shown a slight tendency northward, the proportion in the former slave states having become reduced, as above stated, to 92 per cent.

The Negroes of the Slave States.

In the above pages the history of the negroes has been traced in a broad general way and compared with that of the entire population and the white element of the country. The history is more or less complicated with the results of immigration, and with other disturbing factors, which have affected mainly the north and west. We may now without serious error confine our study of the race to the southern states, the former slaveholding states, in which are found more than nine-tenths of the whole number of the negroes. The movement of these people from the south into the north has been inconsiderable, and there has been but little movement of the whites in either direction across the boundary line between the sections. The south has received little immigration either from the north or from Europe, and the emigration from it has been unimportant. So far as emigration and immigration are concerned it has been throughout our history almost isolated from the rest of the world. So we may without serious error study the relations of the whites and blacks of this region by itself, without reference to other parts of the country.

Proportions of the Races.

The following table and accompanying diagram (Plate IV) show the proportions in which the population of this part of the United States was composed at each census for the past hundred years.

PROPORTIONS IN WHICH THE POPULATION OF FORMER SLAVE STATES WAS MADE UP.

WHITE. NEGRO. 1790 65 35 1800 65 35 1810 63 37 1820 63 37 1830 63 37 1840 63 37 1850 64 36 1860 66 34 1870 68 32 1880 67 33 1890 69 31

It appears from the above table that a century ago the population of the South was made up of whites and negroes in the proportions of 65 and 35 per cent., and that in 1890 the proportions were 69 and 31 per cent. The proportion of negroes increased from 1790 to 1810, when it reached 37 per cent., leaving only 63 per cent. as the proportion of the whites, and remained practically stationary for three decades. Since 1840 the proportion of negroes has diminished.

Rates of Increase.

The following table, showing the rates of increase of the two races for each ten-year period during the past century, leads to a similar conclusion, that is, that for a half-century the negroes increased more rapidly than the whites, while during the last half-century they have increased less rapidly.

PROPORTION OF NEGROES TO TOTAL POPULATION IN 1890.

Proportion which negroes of former slave states bore to population of those states.

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RATES OF INCREASE OF WHITE AND NEGRO ELEMENTS OF FORMER SLAVE STATES.

WHITE. NEGRO. 1790 to 1800 34 33 1800 to 1810 30 39 1810 to 1820 28 30 1820 to 1830 29 32 1830 to 1840 27 24 1840 to 1850 34 27 1850 to 1860 30 22 1860 to 1870 17 8 1870 to 1880 33 34 1880 to 1890 24 13

The Negroes in Cities.

It is well known that as the population of a state or country increases, such increase goes in constantly rising proportion into its cities; in other words, that urban population increases at a more rapid rate than the total population, especially after the population has passed a certain average density. This country presents an excellent example of this tendency of population towards the cities. At the time of the first census only 3 ½ per cent. of the total population was in cities of 8000 inhabitants or more, while in 1890, a century later, the proportion in cities had increased to over 29 per cent. The total population of the country had become very nearly 16 times as great, while its urban element had become 139 times as great. The latter had increased more than 8 times as rapidly as the former.

Having thus illustrated the general tendency of the people towards cities, it will be instructive to see how the negroes have behaved in this regard. In measuring their appetency for urban life I shall consider only the population of the former slave states, and shall contrast the negro with the white element of those states in this regard. I shall follow the practice of the Census Office also in considering as urban the inhabitants of cities of 8000 or more.

In cities of 8000 inhabitants or more there were found in 1860 only 4.2 per cent. of the negroes of these states, while of the whites 10.9 per cent. were found at that time in these 16 cities. The violent social changes attendant upon the war produced, among other results, an extensive migration of negroes to the cities, so that in 1870 the proportion of them found in cities had more than doubled, being no less than 8.5 per cent., while of the whites there were found 13.1 per cent. In 1880 the

proportion of negroes in cities had diminished to 8.4 per cent., while that of the whites had also diminished, being 12.4 per cent.

The census of 1890 shows a decided increase in the proportion of each race in the cities, that of the negroes being 12 per cent. and that of the whites being 15.7 per cent.

Thus it is seen that the proportion of the negroes in the cities has in every case been less than that of the whites, but that they have gained upon the whites in this regard. This gain is, however, very slight and is probably not significant. While the negro is extremely gregarious and is by that instinct drawn toward the great centers of population, on the other hand he is not fitted either by nature or education for those vocations for the pursuit of which men collect in cities, that is, for manufactures and commerce. The inclinations of this race, drawn from its inheritance, tend to keep it wedded to the soil, and the probabilities are that as cities increase in these states in number and size, and with them manufactures and commerce develop, the great body of the negroes will continue to remain aloof from them and cultivate the soil as heretofore.

Geographical Distribution.

The geographical environment of the negro has been made a subject of careful study by the Census Office, and many interesting facts regarding its distribution with reference to topography, altitude, rainfall, and temperature have been developed.

It is found that more than 17 per cent. of them live in the low, swampy regions of the Atlantic coast and in the alluvial region in the Mississippi valley. This proportion contrasts 17 sharply with that of the total population, of which only 4 per cent. are found in these regions. Upon the Atlantic plain the proportion of negroes is also much greater than that of the total population, and, generally speaking, it may be said that they seek low, moist regions and avoid mountainous country. This peculiarity of their distribution is brought out more forcibly in their distribution with reference to elevation above sea-level. At an altitude less than 100 feet above the sea there are found nearly one-fourth of the negroes, while only about one-sixth of the total population is in these regions. Below 500 feet are found seven-tenths, while nearly two-fifths of the total population are found at this altitude. Again, below 1000 feet there are found 94.5 per cent. of all the negroes of the country, while of the total population there are found only 77 per cent. below that altitude.

It is, of course, well known that the negroes prefer higher temperatures than the white race. A measure of this is given by the statement that while the total population lives, on an average, under a mean annual temperature of 53 degrees Fah., that under which the negro lives is, on an average, 61 degrees, or not less than 8 degrees higher. The great body of the negroes live where the mean

annual temperature ranges from 55 degrees to 70 degrees, very nearly 85 per cent. of this element being found within the region thus defined.

Nothing perhaps more sharply characterizes the difference in the habitat of the negroes and the element of foreign birth than the difference in temperature conditions under which they are found, a difference which may be characterized by the following statement: In those regions where the annual temperature exceeds 55 degrees are found seven-eighths of the negroes. On the other hand, in those regions where the temperature is less than 55 degrees are found nine-tenths of the foreign-born.

Those who are acquainted with the relations between the distribution of population and rainfall over the surface of the 18 country are aware that the great body of the negroes is found in regions of heavy rainfall. Indeed, more than nine-tenths of their numbers are found where it exceeds 40 inches annually, and more than three-fifths where it exceeds 50 inches. These figures are greatly in excess of those concerning the total population.

History of the Negro in each Slave State.

Thus far the distribution and history of the race have been considered broadly. It will now be of interest to take up each of the former slave states individually and trace the history of the race within its limits. This is summarized in the following table and group of diagrams (Plate V), which present in each of the former slave states the proportion which the negro element bore to the total population at each census.

For economy of space the black bars representing the proportions in the diagrams are not extended to their full length, so the lengths of the bars do not represent the absolute percentage which the negroes bear to the total population. Since we are interested mainly in the relative lengths of the different bars of each state, and not in comparing those of one state with those of another, this is a matter of no consequence.

In Delaware the proportion of negroes in 1790 was about 22 per cent. This proportion increased gradually until 1840, when it was 25 per cent. Since then it has diminished and in 1890 was about 17 per cent. In Maryland over one-third of the population were negroes in 1790. The proportion increased and reached a maximum in 1810, when it was 38 per cent. Since then it has diminished, and in 1890 was but 21 per cent. In the District of Columbia the proportion of negroes in 1800, the first year of record, was about 29 per cent. It reached its maximum with 33 per cent. in 1810, and from that time steadily diminished until the opening of the Civil War. In 1860 the proportion was 19

per cent. During the war large numbers of negroes took refuge within the Capital, increasing the proportion to about one-third of the total population, which ratio has been maintained.

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In Kentucky one-sixth of the population were negroes in 1790. The proportion increased until 1830, when it was about one-fourth of the population, since which time it has diminished and is at present but 14 per cent.

In Tennessee only one-tenth of the population were negroes at the time of the first census. That proportion steadily increased for 90 years, reaching its maximum in 1880, when it slightly exceeded one-fourth of the population. In the last ten years it has diminished a trifle.

The first report of population regarding Missouri was made in 1810. At that time about one-sixth of the inhabitants were negroes. In 1830 the proportion was slightly greater. Since then it has diminished rapidly and in 1890 the negroes constituted less than 6 per cent. of the population.

In the state of Virginia the negroes constituted in 1790 not less than 41 per cent. of the inhabitants, and their proportion increased slightly for 20 years, reaching a maximum in 1810 of over 43 per cent. Since that time it has diminished steadily and in 1890 constituted but 27 ½ per cent., taking the states of Virginia and West Virginia together.

All the above are border states, and all, with the exception of Tennessee and the District of Columbia, show a similar history. They show an increase in the proportion for two, three, or four of the earlier decades, and then a constant and great diminution in the proportion. The other states show a very different history. North Carolina, starting with 27 per cent., has increased slowly and with some slight oscillations up to 1880, when the proportion reached 38 per cent. In the last decade it has diminished. South Carolina, starting with 44 per cent., increased her proportion until 1880, when more than three-fifths of the population were negroes. Since then there has been a trifling diminution. Georgia started with 36 per cent., and with some slight oscillations continued to increase until 1880. Within the last ten years there has been a slight reduction. In Florida the oscillations have been considerable. The history commenced with 20 1830, when 47 per cent. of the population were negroes. It reached a maximum of 49 per cent. at the next census, followed by a diminution for two decades. Then in 1870 it rose again to 49 per cent., since which time it has diminished rapidly, especially during the decade between 1880 and 1890. The history of Alabama commenced in 1820, when one-third of her people were negroes. The proportion increased up to 1870, and since then has diminished. Mississippi's history began in 1800, when 41 per cent. of her people were negroes, and with some slight oscillations the proportion has increased up to the present time. The history of Louisiana commenced in 1810, when 55 per cent. of her population were negroes. Her history

has been a diversified one, the maximum proportion of this race being reached in 1830 with 59 per cent. Since that time it has, on the whole, diminished, and in 1890 half the people of the State were negroes. The history of Texas began in 1850, when 28 per cent. Of her people were negroes. The proportion increased for two decades, when it reached 31 per cent. Since that time it has diminished rapidly, owing largely to immigration to the central parts of the state. The history of Arkansas begins in 1820, when a little less than one-eighth of its people were negroes. The proportion has increased almost continuously from that time to the present, and in 1890 the negroes formed 27 per cent. of the total population.

Thus it is seen that in the cotton states the proportion of the negro element has in nearly all cases increased until a very recent time. Indeed, in two or three of them it has increased up to the time of the last census, while in most of them the only diminution in the proportion has occurred during the last ten years. All this indicates in the most unmistakable terms a general southward migration of this race. As compared with the whites, the border states have lost in proportion of negroes for the past half-century, while the cotton states have continued to gain until very recently.

PERCENTAGE OF NEGROES TO TOTAL POPULATION IN EACH OF THE SOUTHERN STATES AT EACH CENSUS

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Percentage of Negroes to Total Population.

States. 1890. 1880. 1870. 1860. 1850. 1840. 1830. 1820. 1810. 1800. 1790. Delaware 16.85 18.04 18.23 19.27 22.25 25.00 24.95 24.01 23.82 22.44 21.64 Maryland 20.69 22.49 22.46 24.91 28.32 32.30 34.88 36.12 38.22 36.66 34.74 District of Col'bia. 32.80 33.55 32.96 19.07 26.59 29.87 30.81 31.55 33.07 28.57 Kentucky 14.42 16.46 16.82 20.44 22.49 24.31 24.73 22.95 20.24 18.59 17.03 Tennessee 24.37 26.14 25.61 25.50 24.52 22.74 21.43 19.60 17.52 13.16 10.59 Missouri 5.61 6.70 6.86 10.03 13.20 15.58 18.33 15.78 17.23 Virginia West Virginia 27.51 30.85 31.84 34.39 37.06 40.23 42.69 43.38 43.41 41.57 40.86 North Carolina 34.67 37.96 36.56 36.42 36.36 35.64 35.93 34.38 32.24 29.35 26.81 South Carolina 59.85 60.70 58.93 58.59 58.93 56.41 55.63 52.77 48.40 43.21 43.72 Georgia 46.74 47.02 46.04 44.05 42.44 41.03 42.57 44.41 42.40 37.14 35.93 Florida 42.46 47.01 48.84 44.63 46.02 48.71 47.06 Alabama 44.84 47.53 47.69 45.40 44.73 43.26 38.48 33.19 Mississippi 57.58 57.47 53.65 55.28 51.24 52.33 48.44 44.10 42.94 41.48 Louisiana 49.99 51.46 50.10 49.49 50.65 55.04 58.54 52.01 55.18 Texas 21.84 24.71 30.97 30.27 27.54 Arkansas 27.40 26.25 25.22 25.55 22.73 20.91 15.52 11.76 22

Details of Movements of Negroes Between 1880 and 1890.

The map upon Plate VI shows the movements of this race in detail during the ten years between 1880 and 1890, within the former slave states. The northern part of Missouri and western Texas are not represented upon this map, inasmuch as the number of negroes in these regions is not large.

The areas upon this map which have the darkest shade are those in which the number of negroes has absolutely diminished during the decade in question. The areas in the lightest tint are those in which the negroes have increased, but at a rate less than the increase of the same element in the country at large. The areas of medium tint are those in which the negroes have increased more rapidly than in the country at large.

It is seen at once that the areas in which the negroes have decreased are mainly comprised in the northern of these states, principally in Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, Kentucky, and Missouri, and secondarily in Tennessee and North Carolina. There are also areas of decrease in Texas and small areas in the other states, but these are of little importance in comparison with the great areas of the border states in which the number of negroes has actually diminished.

On the other hand, the areas in which the negroes have increased more rapidly than in the country at large are found mainly in the southern parts of South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, and eastern Texas, with nearly all of Arkansas and Florida. In other words, the most rapid increase of the race has been in the southern and western parts of the region under consideration. There does not appear to be any decided movement into the "Black Belt," which traverses the central part of South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, and Mississippi. Indeed, the heaviest increase is south of this region.

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Conjugal Condition.

The conjugal condition of the negroes is set forth for the first time in the reports of the Eleventh Census. With the exception of the matter of divorce, it is summarized in the following diagram (Plate VII). This shows the proportion of males and females at various ages who were single, married or widowed. It shows that under the age of 15 there are practically no marriages among the race. Between 15 and 20 a small proportion, perhaps about one per cent., of males were married and 14 per cent. of the females. At ages between 20 and 25 a third of the males and nearly three-fifths of the females were married, and with advancing age a constantly increasing proportion of both sexes is either married or widowed. It is evident, however, that the women marry much younger than men. The proportion of widowed first becomes appreciable between the ages of 20 and 25 years. It increases much more rapidly among females than among males, and altogether the proportion of

widows is many times greater than that of widowers, showing that many more widowers remarry than widows, and that they marry largely unmarried women.

Comparison of conjugal statistics of the negroes with those of the whites develops two points of difference. First, that the negroes marry younger than the whites; second, that the proportion of widows at most ages is greater than among whites. The first of these facts is in accord with the shorter life-period of the race; the second is a result of the greater death-rate of the race.

Statistics of divorce show more frequent severance of conjugal relations among the negroes than among the whites. The proportion of divorced persons to married persons in the United States at large among the native whites was 0.59 of 1 per cent., while among the negroes it was 0.67 of 1 percent.

Mortality.

There is no question but that the rate of mortality among the negro population is considerably greater than among the whites. It is not easy, however, to obtain an accurate measure of the relative death-rates of the two races. The census statistics upon this subject are unreliable, since the returns from which they are derived are by no means complete. Were the omissions uniformly distributed between the two races, we might still derive a comparison from them regarding the death-rates of the two races, but unfortunately there is every probability that the omissions are much greater proportionally among the negroes than among the whites. It is only in a few large southern cities which maintain a registration of deaths that reliable figures are to be had. In these cities the relative death-rates during the census year (1890) are shown in the following table:

Total Population. Native Whites. Negroes. St. Louis 19 17 35 Baltimore 25 22 36 New Orleans 28 22 37 Washington 26 19 38 Louisville 22 18 32

From these figures it appears that in the large cities the annual death-rate of the negroes is very nearly if not quite double that of the native whites. It is probable that in the rural districts the disproportion among the death-rates is not as great, since it is probable that a rural environment is better suited to the negroes than the environment of a large city. However this may be, there is no reasonable question, as stated above, that the death-rate of the negroes is much larger than that of the whites.

Criminality.

The proportion of criminals among the negroes is much greater than among the whites. The statistics of the last census show that the white prisoners of native extraction confined in jails at

the time the census was taken were in the proportion of 9 to each 10,000 of all whites of native extraction, while the negro prisoners were in the proportion of 33 25 to each 10,000 of the negro population. Thus it appears that the proportion of negroes was nearly four times as great as for the whites of native extraction. It should be added, however, that the commitments of negroes are for petty offenses in much greater proportion than among the whites.

Pauperism.

In respect to pauperism, the investigations of the census have been confined to paupers maintained in almshouses and have not been extended to those persons receiving outdoor relief, either permanent or temporary. The number of white paupers of native extraction in almshouses was found to be in the proportion of 8 to every 10,000 whites of native extraction, while the negro paupers were in the same proportion. Lest these figures should mislead, however, it must be added to this statement that in the south but little provision is made in the form of almshouses for the relief of the poor, this provision being confined almost entirely to the northern part of the country, a fact which in itself explains the small proportion of the negro paupers in almshouses. On the other hand, it is a matter of common knowledge to any resident of a southern city that the negroes form a disproportionately large element of the recipients of outdoor charity.

Illiteracy and Education.

Of the progress of the negro race in education, the statistics are by no means as full and comprehensive as is desirable. Such as we possess, however, go to indicate a remarkably rapid progress of the race in the elements of education. During the prevalence of slavery this race was kept in ignorance. Indeed, generally throughout the south it was held as a crime to teach the negroes to read and write, and naturally when they became freemen only a trifling proportion of them were acquainted with these elements of education. In 1870, five years after they became free, the records of the census show that only two-tenths of all the negroes over ten 26 years of age in the country could write. Ten years later the proportion had increased to three-tenths of the whole number, and in 1890, only a generation after they were emancipated, not less than 43 out of every hundred negroes, of ten years of age and over, were able to read and write. These figures show a remarkably rapid progress in elementary education.

In 1860 the number of negroes who were enrolled in the schools of the south was absolutely trifling. Since the abolition of slavery the number has increased with the greatest rapidity. This is shown in the following table, which relates only to the inhabitants of the former slave states. The first column shows the proportion which the number of white children enrolled in the public schools bore to the

white population, and the second column the proportion which the number of negro children in the public schools bore to the total negro population of these states.

White. Negro. 1870 13.50 3.07 1880 18.33 13.07 1890 21.92 18.71

It is seen from the above table that in 1870 the white pupils constituted 13.5 per cent. of the white population, and that in 20 years this proportion increased to nearly 22 per cent. On the other hand, the negro school children constituted in 1870 only 3 per cent. of all negroes, but that in 20 years it has increased to nearly 19 per cent. of all negroes. The proportion of negro school children increased at a far more rapid rate than that of the white school children, and in 1890 had nearly reached it.

The following table shows the proportion of school enrollment to population in 1890 in each of these states:

27 Per Cent. of Enrollment to Population. White. Negro. Delaware 19.12 16.38 Maryland 17.93 16.69 District of Columbia 15.24 17.61 Virginia 21.59 19.20 West Virginia 25.58 20.04 North Carolina 19.79 20.80 South Carolina 19.49 16.46 Georgia 21.40 15.51 Florida 24.37 21.85 Kentucky 22.27 20.40 Tennessee 26.49 23.58 Alabama 22.40 17.10 Mississippi 27.71 24.60 Louisiana 13.43 8.82 Texas 21.06 22.21 Arkansas 19.98 19.22 Missouri 23.24 21.76

An examination of this table shows that in the District of Columbia, North Carolina, and Texas the proportional enrollment of negroes was greater than that of the whites, while in the other states it was less.

The following table shows the rate of increase in the enrollment in each of these states from 1880 to 1890:

Per Cent. White. Negro. Delaware 10.75 108.42 Maryland 20.07 35.78 District of Columbia 27.62 67.34 Virginia 44.44 78.77 West Virginia 33.68 59.72 North Carolina 29.51 22.97 South Carolina 45.64 55.33 Georgia 39.09 53.81 Florida 98.07 132.71 Kentucky 34.44 89.20 Tennessee 53.88 65.56 Alabama 66.95 53.52 Mississippi 30.75 50.66 Louisiana 61.72 42.56 Texas 179.36 143.65 Arkansas 101.08 121.29 Missouri 27.18 36.42 28

From this table it appears that in all excepting four states, namely, North Carolina, Alabama, Louisiana, and Texas, the enrollment of negro children in the public schools has increased more rapidly than has that of the whites.

Summing up this article in a paragraph, the following conclusions may be stated:

The negroes, while increasing rapidly in this country, are diminishing in numbers relative to the whites.

They are moving southward from the border states into those of the south Atlantic and the Gulf.

They prefer rural life rather than urban life.

The proportion of criminals among the negroes is much greater than among the whites, and that of paupers is at least as great.

In the matter of education, the number of negro attendants at school is far behind the number of whites, but is gaining rapidly upon that race.

Only one generation has elapsed since the slaves were freed. To raise a people from slavery to civilization is a matter, not of years, but of many generations. The progress which the race has made in this generation in industry, morality, and education is a source of the highest gratification to all friends of the race, to all excepting those who expected a miraculous conversion.